

Washington, DC - The U.S. House of Representatives today approved a sweeping solar energy investment bill that includes a provision authored by Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) that positions New York to get its fair share of federal funding for solar energy research and development. The Solar Technology Roadmap Act charts out a plan for solar energy investments throughout the United States over the next five years, making annual investments of up to \$550 million nationwide. Hinchey's provision, which was added to the bill before it was brought up for a final vote, requires the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to spread these solar energy investment funds out across the country. Previous funding allocations have been heavily focused in the southwest region of the country.

"Rather than having precious federal resources for solar energy research and development go primarily to the southwest, this bill now ensures that funding will be spread evenly across the different regions of the country," Hinchey said. "With a lot of hard work over the past several years, we've established New York as a hub for solar energy research and development, and positioned the state to be on the receiving end of the federal research dollars that will be obligated as a result of this bill. Solar and other forms of renewable energy will be a leading sector of our economy for years to come and we are making sure New York is right there at the front of this green industrial revolution."

Hinchey's provision accomplishes three things that will help ensure New York receives its fair share of funding. First, as part of the Solar Technology Roadmap Committee setup under the bill to advise the DOE on solar issues, Hinchey's provision requires the committee to be comprised of individuals who represent diverse geographic regions of the country. Second, the provision would ensure that the roadmap addresses the need to make solar technologies widely available and used in all regions of the country. Lastly, Hinchey's provision requires that demonstration projects setup as part of the underlying bill be undertaken throughout different regions of the country and that such projects are not concentrated in any single geographic area.

TSEC President Vincent Cozzolino said, "TSEC applauds Congressman Hinchey for his continued support of solar energy research and development and deployment. Congressman Hinchey's provision will ensure that federal investments to advance solar energy deployment will benefit every area of the country, including our area, the northeast. Since solar and environmental conditions differ across the nation, this idea makes good sense and will help to optimize solar energy generation by region. This positions New York State to take advantage of the intent of this legislation."

The Solar Technology Roadmap Act establishes a comprehensive roadmapping process to guide the DOE's investment in solar technology research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) activities. The Secretary of Energy is also directed to award grants to carry out these programs on a merit-reviewed basis, and specifically to provide awards to industry-led consortia for RD&D in solar manufacturing. The roadmap provision is modeled on the successful National (now International) Technology Roadmap for Semiconductors, which has been instrumental in helping semiconductor technology advance rapidly over the past two decades. The bill authorizes \$350 million for DOE to carry out these activities in fiscal year 2011, rising to \$550 million in fiscal year 2015.

In 2007, Hinchey helped establish The Solar Energy Consortium (TSEC) -- an industry-driven, non-profit organization that provides leadership, organization, resources, and support for the establishment of a major solar energy industry cluster in New York. The congressman has now secured more than \$20 million in federal funds for TSEC and its partners with additional funding to be announced in the coming weeks that will increase that figure to nearly \$30 million. The consortium has partnered with more than 70 small and large companies, including nearly a dozen that have already created 200 jobs in the Hudson Valley and collectively plan to bring more than 1,000 new jobs to upstate New York within the next five years.